

[6 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

- (vii) To undertake surveillance of suspected dealers.
- (viii) To engage experienced counsel for fighting spurious drug cases.
- (ix) To obtain cooperation of Pharmaceutical Industry by regular interaction with them.
- (x) To collect survey samples under National Survey Quality Evaluation of Drug (NSQED) programme.

The All India Organisation of Chemist and Druggist Association (AIOCD) holds National Pharmacy Weeks from time to time to create awareness among the public. Do's and Don'ts for consumers are also published.

- (xi) To ensure manufacture of qualitative drugs/medicines in the country Good Manufacturing Practices is a statutory requirement under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. These provisions are being upgraded.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Director General of Health Services (DGHS) on July 18, 2001 to go into all aspects of the menace of spurious drugs and suggest remedial measures.

News-item "Silent killer seeps through rural Gangetic delta"

1531. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Silent killer seeps through rural Gangetic delta" which appeared in the Times of India, dated 24th April, 2001 highlighting arsenic mix in West Bengal ground water affecting some 53 lakh population;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto including the details of relevant reports and studies of World Health Organisation mentioned therein; and

(c) the assessment made by Central Government and the measures taken to provide clean drinking water to the affected population and plans drawn upto fight the arsenic-induced ailments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Arsenic Concentration in Ground Water beyond the permissible limit of 0.05 mg/l has been identified in 67 Blocks of 8 districts of the State of West Bengal. The population at risk according to the latest survey, is 62.85 lakhs. With provision of Arsenic free

drinking water there has been notable reduction of Arsenic related diseases in Malda district, West Bengal.

All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Kolkata has undertaken the following work in terms of monitoring, evaluation, research and development studies, technology development, capacity building and training:—

(i) The R and D studies to find the arsenic contamination of ground water, sponsored by Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission (RGNDWM) during 1990-91.

(ii) Studies for the development of technology of removal of arsenic from drinking water, sponsored by Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission (1990).

(iii) Monitoring and evaluation of the arsenic problem in the districts of West Bengal (more than 15,000-20,000 samples were tested) (1995—2000).

(iv) Capacity building and training programme for professional engineers, Panchayat and NGO personnel and creation of mass awareness among the community, sponsored by WHO (1997- 98).

(v) In order to provide immediate relief to the people and supplement the Government effort on a long-term basis, AIIH&PH with support from India-Canada Environment Facility (ICEF) is launching decentralized community based arsenic mitigation project with the following objectives.

(i) A rapid and realistic assessment of the magnitude of the problem at the village level by training of grass-root level workers being using field test kits.

(ii) Diagnosis and treatment of patients suffering from arsenic poisoning by training rural medicos.

(iii) Immediate supply of safe water to the affected/at-risk population and development of a long term village specification plan.

(iv) Creation of mass awareness and IEC activities.

(v) Capacity building at the grass-root level.

Since 1996, the Public Health Engineering Department of the State Government has been implementing the following Water Supply Schemes for supplying arsenic free drinking water in different Arsenic affected Blocks with foreign assistance.

(i) Water supply Scheme for arsenic affected areas of North 24-Parganas district.

- (ii) Water Supply Scheme for arsenic affected areas of Murshidabad and Nadiad districts. A joint Action Plan with UNICEF has been taken up by the State Government for quick identification of arsenic affected sources, provision of arsenic Removal Units and capacity building for community management of such Units.

Government of India has so far sanctioned four Water Supply Schemes under arsenic sub Mission with 75 : 25 financial participation between Government of India and State Government.

The financial assistance from Government of India is in addition to Central Assistance for normal Water Supply programmes.

Violation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act

1532. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the supply of products to World Bank assisted tender for TB are tested at NIPER for quality;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the supplies are made without batch numbers in violation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act; and
- (c) if so, the action being taken against the suppliers violating the Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) As per the technical specifications prescribed for and TB drugs in accordance with the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, it is mandatory to indicate batch numbers; date of manufacturing and date of expiry of the blisters or packages. Supply of drugs are made directly from manufacturer to project districts/GMSDs. No complaint regarding* batch numbers of supplies has been reported from any of the project districts or GMSDs.

- (c) Not applicable.

Malnutrition among Indian children

1533. DR. KARAN SINGH:

SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether malnutrition among Indian children, who constitute 38 per